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ABSTRACT

This paper presents the results of efforts focusing on equitable practices in education in three states. The paper has three objectives: (1) to provide an overview of the implementation of equitable instructional strategies designed to increase student achievement and close identified performance gaps between and within traditional underserved populations; (2) to examine a number of methodologies for collection and quantifying data as a self-monitoring and decision-making strategy for practitioners; and (3) to summarize experiences and findings from three different studies in collaboration with practitioner researchers in Arizona, California, and New York. It was the goal of this paper to share a synthesis of the literature, experiences, and findings related to perception and expectations of those in positions of educational influence; examine the connections among instructional interaction patterns, curriculum content, and learning environments; and identify effective techniques for data collection and self-monitoring. In addition, this paper relates how practitioners can apply and transfer the accumulated knowledge and experience to others in education. Included in an appendix is a survey instrument from one of the studies. (Author/WFA)

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Using Equitable Practices to Improve Educational Quality: Implementation Examples and Results

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Using Equitable Practices to Improve Educational Quality: Implementation Examples and Results

Dolores A. Grayson, Ph.D.

This paper will share the results of longitudinal professional development and assessmemt efforts focusing on equitable practices in three states. In each location, the participants have been encouraged to collect and apply data as a tool for improvement throughout the instructional setting. In addition to a description of each design by the author, practitioner researchers provide summaries of the implementation and findings in their respective settings

In Arizona, there was a four year effort to improve equitable instruction especially for female middle school students in the largest elementary district in the state. In New York, the work is in the third year of an on-going collaboration with a statewide K-16 Alliance of educators from colleges and universities and their partner K-12 colleagues. In California, a two year systemwide review was completed in one of the largest and most successful districts, to assess the status of students identified in greatest need and develop a plan which would include techniqes to institutionalize equitable practices, as needed. The latter study included eighteen site visits and over 100 classroom observations.

Objectives: The paper will:

1) Provide an overview of the implementation of equitable instructional strategies designed to increase student achievement and close identified performance gaps between and within traditionally underserved populations.
2) Examine a number of methodologies for collecting and quantifying data as a self-monitoring and decision-making stategy for practitioners.
3) Summarize experiences and findings from three different studies in collaboration with practitioner researchers in Arizona, New York and California.

Theoretical Framework: Working within the context of equity for women and girls (and underserved males) in the educational community and utilizing funding opportunities for professional development related to these concerns, these combined qualitative studies are the result of on-going efforts to translate theory into practice. It was the goal of this paper to share a synthesis of the literature, experiences and findings related to perceptions and expectations of those in positions of educational influence, examine the connections with instructional interaction patterns, curriculum content and learning environments and identify effective techniques for data collection and self-monitoring. In addition, the author shares how practitioners can apply and transfer the accumulated knowledge and experience to others in education.

Data Sources:

A) In Arizona, the largest elementary school district conducted a program, funded through the Women's Educational Equity Act (WEEA). It was composed of a partnership of educators, practicing scientists and engineers, business executives, members of professional associations and education advocates. Included in the components was training for preschool, elementary and middle school staff in gender-equitable teaching and learning practices, some of which were based on prior work by the author of this paper. The system serves approximately 25,000 students. These include a large number of high poverty females and females of color.

The director of this project was one of the practitioner researchers mentioned earlier,who provided information and data from this source.

B) In New York, there is a K-16 Educational Alliance that has been formed between the New York State Department of Education, a consortium of colleges and universities, teams of educators from collaborating school districts and business partnerships. This Alliance was originally funded through Eisenhower Higher Education Professional Development funds. The members of the Alliance including equitable instructional strategies developed by the author of this proposal in their inquiry-based school improvement components and in their pre-service methodology courses. Two of the Alliance's directors and many of the participating professors have provided information and data from this source.

C) In a large district in Southern California, the Learning Resource staff and the Human Relations Council are incorporating a systematic approach to equitable instruction and curriculum revision in their efforts to increase student achievement and close the performance gaps between groups of students identified in greatest need and those who are already succeeding. Much of this work is based on information provided from a districtwide review conducted by the author of this paper. This is a significant model, due to the number of students served by this district and the influence it has with policymakers at the state level. The district coordinator for this effort assisted the researcher with documentation and coordinated visitations to eighteen sites in order to provide opportunities for observations and interviews, which provided data from this source.

The author compiled the preliminary work for this paper during her research and professional development efforts with colleagues and practitioners across the country during the last twenty-five years. During the author's work with these three states, many of the equitable practices implemented in each of the three locations were research-based on a synthesis of theory and practice from prior work that spans seven decades. The methodology suggested and taught to the practitioners was mixed, employing both quantitative and qualitative techniques for data collection, data analysis and reflective self-assessment. In addition, suggestions were made for measuring program effectiveness and student achievement.

State Summaries and Results

Arizona

As submitted in the original proposal, the overriding goal of this project was to help female middle school students develop extraordinary competence and confidence in their abilities to collaborate and learn. To that end, grant funds were used to develop a comprehensive program which contained the following components:

- Training for preschool, elementary and middle school staff in gender-equitable teaching and learning practices;
- Leadership training for preschool, elementary and middle school teachers to enable them to offer staff development in gender-equitable teaching and learning practices;
- Mentoring, career counseling, and a school-to-work transition program for approximately 150 girls in grades 7-12 to enable them to become mathematicians, scientists, and engineers and to compete in a global marketplace
- Providing minority role models to minority students and documenting contributors to success;

•Training for parents of preschool, elementary and middle school children to allow them to expand their personal knowledge of how they can foster and support the achievement of their daughters; and

•Policy implementation which addresses gender equity and prevention of sexual harassment to insure that the educational environment of the school district is free from threats to the safety of students and personnel and promotes maximum learning.

Aligned with the above components, the project activities were designed to yield the following measurable outcomes/objectives:

Outcome #1 Teachers' Personal Knowledge - Expand pre-school, elementary and middle school teachers' personal knowledge of gender equitable teaching and learning practices.

Outcome #2 Leadership Training - Provide leadership training for preschool, elementary and middle school teachers to enable them to offer staff development in gender-equitable teaching and learning practices and in sexual harassment

Outcome #3 Students' Personal Knowledge - Expand girls' personal knowledge of science, math and engineering concepts and careers through career counseling, a school-to-work transition program and mentoring.

Outcome #4 Minority Female Role Models - Provide minority role models and mentors to female minority students

Outcome #5 Parents' Personal Knowledge - Expand parents' personal knowledge of careers in science, math and engineering and how they can foster achievement toward those careers.

Outcome #6 District Policy Implementation - Expand the implementation of the district policy on sexual harassment to ensure that school environments are free from threats to the safety of students and personnel.

Charts in the Appendix provide highlights of the progress that the project made toward accomplishing the overriding goal and objectives during the four years of operation. They summarize an overview of specifically who was involved in the project and how they were involved, by outcome and year.

As indicated by the charts, each Outcome was met and/or exceeded expectations as proposed, with the exception of Outcome 2: Leadership. The following rationale was offered as an explanation. The proposed annual budget was reduced by an average of over $50,000 (over 33 $^{1}/_{3}$ %) per year, with most of the cuts in the personnel and contractual categories. Consequently, the Leadership Component was revised and implemented during the last two years, with a more limited approach than originally anticipated. However, the Leadership Component was institutionalized by leaving two staff members in place (who are now Gender Equity Specialists) who could serve as district resources.

Of the remaining five Outcomes, all were implemented as proposed. Outcome 1, Teacher Knowledge, was very successful in providing training designed to expand teachers' knowledge of gender equitable teaching and learning practices during each of the four funded years. This was accomplished as indicated by the number of participating teachers and their responses on pre/post-test scores, and survey results. The results yielded an average increase of 27% in teacher knowledge and perceived average increases of 3.87 and 4.49 (on a 5-point scale) in usefulness and knowledge on the final surveys.

Outcome 3, Student Knowledge, was extremely successful. A total of 1314 seventh & eigth grade students participated in a variety of activities and mentoring, designed to provide exposure to math, science and engineering. Results ranged from increased math GPA scores and increased awareness of math, science and engineering careers to high percentage ratings on knowledge questions related to engineering and science.

Outcome 4, Minority Female Role Models, was very successful. A total of 128 mentors were selected and participated over the four year period and several more volunteered. Of the 128 mentors, 45 (over 35%) identified as "Ethnic Minority." These, included Asian American, African American, Hispanic/Latina American, Native American and East Indian American. Results from anecdotal data collected through group meetings and individual interviews identified patterns of concern. The anecdotal data also revealed increased levels of students' performance, confidence and interest in math, science and engineering careers.

Outcome 5, Parent's Knowledge, was very successful. A total of 196 parent participants expanded their knowledge of careers in science, math and engineering by attending activities with their respective students. They also attended project orientation sessions, the year-end banquets and "Parents as Partners" Workshops during the last three years of the project. All evaluations rated the sessions as good or excellent and pre/post evaluations indicated increased knowledge regarding opportunities and ways to encourage their daughters toward math, science and engineering.

Outcome 6, District Policy Implementation, was successful, as measured by participation of 505 Administrators and teachers in general workshop sessions on gender equity awareness, sexual harassment policies, sexual misconduct and child abuse reporting. In addition, the project and Gender Equity Specialists (GES) served as a resource for administrators on sexual harassment policies. The written policies were disseminated to district personnel and the community through a mailer and the GES were involved in the revision of the district's teacher evaluation instrument.

As indicated by the evidence, all components of the project were completed successfully. Results support that the components on Teacher Knowledge, Student Knowledge, Providing Role Models and Parent Knowledge (Outcomes 1, 3, 4 & 5) were highly effective and contributed new information to the body of knowledge on helping female middle school students develop competence and confidence in their abilities to collaborate and learn.

New York

There were two people, Alysan Slighter and Carol Blunt-White, responsible for the coordination and implementation of Generating Expectations for Student Achievement - An equitable approach to educational excellence (GESA) throughout the K-16 Alliance in New York. The GESA program and materials have been discussed in previous papers and presentations. (Grayson & Martin, 1997). Recent reports from Blunt-White indicate that over 230 educators (K-16) have been trained as GESA facilitators since July 2000. Participants have turnkeyed GESA training in schools, districts and in churches. There have been several presentations at conferences and to boards of education. Higher education faculty have incorporated GESA into their preservice methods courses, undergraduate and graduate courses and

into their teaching practices. Seasoned K-12 teachers report that their participation in GESA facilitator training has resulted in changes in their classroom behavior and practices and in their personal approaches to teaching. For example, one of the upstate Universities has incorporated GESA into the methods course taught at their professional development school (PDS). Two of the Professors have written about their experiences in a research paper delivered to a national PDS conference. In their paper they observed that teachers became aware of their personal power to influence students' lives.

> The teachers were impressed by the research showing connections between teacher behavior and student achievement. This heightened awareness became the stimulus for implementing GESA observations, as they felt increased responsibility for student learning. They identified successful teaching strategies and incorporated them more systematically; they recognized negative teaching behaviors and replaced them with positive ones. They also expanded the definition of diversity to include more types of differences (e.g. abilities) and made clearer the relation between diversity and equity (Beyerbach & Ramalho, 2003).
>
> **Insights into practice: The power of focused observation.** Between each scheduled meeting, GESA study group participants observed and were observed by a peer, thus collecting data on one of the five areas of disparity. For example, after learning about instructional contact and its role in promoting student achievement, teachers investigated frequency of student participation in classroom discussions, and likelihood of receiving teacher feedback. This data led teachers to reflect on how students from different social class, race, gender, and ability backgrounds are treated. Teachers held and interpreted their own data, and had the choice of either inviting the observer to discuss it, or to reflect about it privately. The role of the observer was to provide data without interpretation or judgment, to 'see' what the teacher cannot scrutinize while teaching (Beyerbach & Ramalho, 2003).
>
> Observations of teacher practice yielded four findings. 1) First, teachers became aware of how rarely they have the opportunity to observe each other teaching, and emphasized the value of observations in professional development. 2) Second, while observations were valued, these also caused teachers a great deal of anxiety. 3) Third, teachers reported more awareness of behaviors that affect student learning and of their own unconscious differential treatment of students. 4) Fourth, new awareness and behaviors had a multiplier effect as they were shared with preservice teachers (Beyerbach & Ramalho, 2003).

Many are aligning the work with national and state standards. In addition, several of the colleges have developed web-based GESA courses and the Alliance personnel report that they continue to follow-up and support implementation in schools and districts across the state. During 2001-2002, one participating school increased the number of students meeting the standards from 16% to 50% during the GESA implementation period. The school had the greatest growth in the district. The district has acknowledged GESA as a major contributor, because while all schools in the district were going through the same professional development program, this school was the only school implementing GESA. As a result, the superintendent has requested that the same protocol be used in all schools in the district (Blunt-White, 2002).

California

In gathering the information for this study, several questions guided the interviews, observations and review of materials. Based on prior knowledge generated by a Human Relations District Advisory Committee (HRDAC) a major purpose of the equity audit was to determine to what extent the district and personnel were achieving cultural competence in curriculum offerings and in all educational

programs and practices, especially at the site level. Using the information from a Cultural Diversity Plan progress report, dated 1996-1997 and an annual report of the HRDAC, listing eight priorities from the 2000-2001 school year, the following questions were generated:

- Is there evidence of previous diversity training of staff at the site (school) level and to what extent is it impacting student participation and achievement?
- How knowledgeable of cultural competence and procedural requirements related to human relations are the administrators and staff, especially at the site level?
- Are there site coordinators for Human Relations and Diversity training?
- Are students participating in Human Relations Classes and related activities?
- Is culturally inclusive content being infused throughout the curriculum at all levels?
- What is being done to link schools with the community and involve parents from diverse backgrounds?
- Is achievement for all students a criterion for success?

A review of the research reported over the past several decades indicates that major factors which influence student achievement include:

1) curriculum content and materials;
2) instructional strategies and interactions in the classroom, and
3) learning environment.

Furthermore, recent research in cultural competence and responsiveness emphasizes the importance of ethnic identity development and the understanding of ethnic group cultures, as well as prejudice reduction (Bennett, 2001 & Gay, 2000). Classroom interaction research has identified areas of disparity in the classroom related directly to perceptions and expectations and how teachers and students and others manifest them in educational settings. Major areas of disparity tied directly to race, ethnicity and gender include:

1) frequency and quality of instructional contact;
2) grouping of students and structure of the learning environment;
3) classroom management and discipline techniques;
4) ways in which teachers reinforce positive self-esteem and the self-concept of the students as learners, and;
5) ongoing evaluation and assessment of student participation and performance, including qualitative feedback with a reason or explanation.

Specific behaviors have been associated with teachers who have high expectations for students. These include providing multiple opportunities to participate in learning activities, giving specific feedback, waiting for the student to think before responding, assisting and probing for more information, asking more complex questions that require students to think for themselves and moving toward or being physically close to the students. (Grayson & Martin, 1984, 1990, 1997 and Grayson, 1998 & 2000). This knowledge base determined the scope and specifics of the observations. Finally, state and federal legislation has stipulated that educational agencies receiving state and /or federal funds must comply with specific civil rights remedies for students and employees. Sections on procedural requirements were included as a service to the district for reference in any future reviews.

Methodology and Data Collection

The primary data sources were a review of printed materials, policies and curriculum guides provided by a district contact and site administrators. Additional information was gathered through formal and informal interviews with district and site level personnel, students and community members. The main sources were the visitations to eighteen (18) schools and the field notes from the observations. These sites included four high schools, five middle schools and nine elementary schools. The schools spanned

the geographical boundaries of the district service area. During the site visits, observations were made in over one hundred (100) classrooms, as well as in multiple play and athletic areas, multipurpose rooms, lunch areas and on the campuses in general. Office interviews were conducted with more than thirty site administrators and coordinators, including Principals, Assistant Principals, Wellness Coordinators, and Reading Specialists. The visitations followed multiple meetings with district personnel and the HRDAC.

District Findings

Procedural

A preliminary review of the printed materials included District Board Policy and Administrative procedure manuals, reports from the Human Relations District Advisory Committee, a copy of the District Cultural Diversity Plan, Curriculum Guides, Academic Standards for History, Social Science K-12, Math, Science and Technology K-5, course descriptions on specific courses, the Language Census for Spring 2001, Demographic Summaries for all students tested, plus assessment reports, pamphlets for parents and students on Harassment, SAT score summaries, a Parent Emergency/Disaster Preparedness Guide and a District Information Packet. In addition, a cursory review of the District website was conducted.

A review of the informational pamphlets and district profile indicates that the district motto is "All Students Learning - Whatever it Takes." The mission statement includes that each student will "develop the skills and attitudes essential for success in school and in a diverse society." Just under one third of the students served are Asian, Filipino, Hispanic or African American and over sixty languages are spoken by the student's families. According to the Language Census, 2,234 students are English Language Learners (ELL) and 3,626 students are Fluent English Proficient (FEP). Fifteen of the schools visited during the audit have been named as National Blue Ribbon Schools and/or State Distinguished Schools. The aforementioned materials, the pamphlets on Harassment, the information distributed to schools on Title IX and other Civil Rights Remedies and the published names and numbers of the district compliance coordinators are all evidence of the district's efforts to meet the procedural requirements related to human relations and educational equity.

The Board Policies are in the process of being reviewed, updated and rewritten. As required, there were sections on equal opportunity for all students (5.9) with a statement that included a "...need to guard against unconscious race and sex discrimination." There was a section on Sexual Harassment for Employees (4.123) and for students (5.24). Most of the policies were written in bias free language with inclusive terminology.

Curriculum

The Section on Educational Programs, (3.0) including Curriculum Development (3.1), Secondary Curriculum Development and Articulation (3.1.3), and Textbook Adoption and Curriculum Revision - K-12 (3.1.3), was under revision. Reportedly, at the time of the review, the Board was in the process of approving the Curriculum Development and Adoption revisions determined by a Standards-based course of study. There are content standards and State Board of Education (SBE) adopted instructional materials and resources for the CORE subjects of History/Social Science, Science, Math, Reading, Language Arts and ELD. There are no standards, but EBE adopted instructional resources for Visual and Performing Arts, Foreign Language and Health. There are no standards for SBE adopted instructional resources for Physical Education or School to Career. It was not clear if there is any culturally responsive review of the CORE Literature list or class reading lists, nor if all new materials adopted for grades K-1 are reviewed with equity in mind for all groups. In reviewing the existing high

school lists it was obvious that some effort had been made to include some women authors from diverse ethnic backgrounds, but the lists were very limited and heavy with white European American males.

The K-5 Science Standard on Diversity and Interdependence, the K-5 Technology Standard on Social, Ethical and Cultural issues and the History/Social Science Standards provide opportunities for the inclusion of a pluralistic approach to teaching the content, including a specific standard on Cultural Literacy. For the most part, the paper compliance is in place. The site reviews will reflect whether or not it is being implemented and to what extent the standards are finding their way to the classroom. At the high school level, there are seven sections of the Human Relations Course being taught. According to the information provided, it does not count toward college credit. There is a second course taught at the ninth grade level on World Geography and Cultures. It counts toward college credit. One of the sources shared that College Preparatory and College Credit drives many of the student's choices. The list for Elementary and Middle School Basic and Supplemental Adopted Textbooks from Learning Support Services all have cultural and gender neutral titles and are recognizable as more current and inclusive books.

Assessment Review

A brief review of assessment data from 2001 indicates that the district is one of the two highest performing districts in the County. A specific comparison of scores for all students tested at the ninth grade level in Mathematics and Language Arts revealed that 80% of students tested in the district passed the Mathematics portion of the State High School Exit Examination with a mean scale score of 380. In addition 95% of students tested in the district passed the English/Language Arts portion with a mean scale score of 402. The County scores indicate a 51% passing rate with a mean scale score of 354 for math and 77% passing with a mean scale score of 378 in English/Language Arts.

A review of ethnic group data for the same test indicates that students tested in the district outscored their respective county group scores in every category and all are above the national norms. Areas of concern emerging from interviews during the Human Relations audit included assessment scores for specific populations of students, especially African American and Hispanic/Latino. It is important to note that both of these groups of students in the district are well above the overall County scores. For example, 61% of African American students tested in the district passed the math test with a mean scale score of 354, while 26% of African American students tested in the County passed the math test with a mean sale score of 334. In the English/Language arts test, 81% of African American students tested in the district passed with a mean scale score of 383, while 58% of African American students tested in the County passed with a mean scale score of 356. For Hispanic/Latino students in the district, 66% of those tested passed the math test with a mean scale score of 364 and 86% passed the English/Language arts test with a mean scale score of 386. In the County, 29% of the Hispanic/Latino students tested in math had a mean scale score of 336 and 53% of the Hispanic/Latino students tested in English/Language Arts had a mean scale score of 353.

The same trends are true when comparing scores for students who are economically disadvantaged, for English Language Learners and for those receiving Special Education services in the district when compared with the County scores for all of those groups. In every instance, the students in these groups that traditionally under-perform on standardized test are scoring well above their respective County group scores and the national norms. The district is to be commended for the successes indicated by all of these results.

However, while the scores may be higher for the various groups than the county and national norms, performance gaps do persist within the district and the concerns are reinforced by the data. The greatest

disparities appear to especially impact the ethnic groups mentioned earlier when compared with their Asian/Asian American and white (European American) counterparts. Gaps also exist between socioeconomic groups and language groups. There is a need to continue to disaggregate the data and identify continuing areas of concern.

District Staff Interviews
General Observations

During the site visitations, I made it a point to seek out teachers, administrators, aides, campus supervisors and parents who represented a number of diverse ethnic groups, but especially African American, Latino/a American, Filipino American and other Asian American. I was especially interested in how they came to be in the district, what their experiences had been, how they felt they had been treated and what suggestions, if any, they had for the district pertaining to this review. I reported these comments in a general way to honor the candor with which they spoke and to put the focus on the messages and not the messengers.

Almost all of the professional staff members expressed concern for feelings of tokenism and the lack of diversity among the teaching staff. One African American male was completely non-responsive to any questions about his personal experiences with the district other than to say that he feels supported. Others were aware of the fact that I was coming on campus and sought out or welcomed the opportunity to share their opinions, experience and insights. At least one African American teacher expressed that it took an additional year for tenure to be granted. A middle school science teacher said, "We need more diversity on our staff." An African American female who is at one of the elementary schools said that she had received good support from the district and has had a positive experience at her present school.

Some of those interviewed live in the community and have children in the schools. Many have had ties to the military or have come from other communities or settings in which they were accustomed to being "one of a few" among many. Others live out of the community in which they work and were advised against or questioned about coming here, especially some of the African Americans with whom I spoke. There is an "image" or perception outside of the district that this community is not a place for people of color. A college Professor told one teacher this. Another teacher was dismayed when parents asked, "Who's the least racist?" when selecting a school and/or teacher for their child. Ironically, most of the people I interviewed said that they had been glad they came and that, for the most part, their experiences have been positive and they feel supported by the district and their schools. One talked about the responsiveness of a Principal to address the needs of students of color. The teacher being interviewed had suggested diversity training for the staff. The Principal responded by being the first to take the training, then provided it for the entire staff.

More than one person expressed concern about the low test performance of African American students. There is the feeling that performance gaps persist, are acknowledged and then ignored, as though nothing can be done about them. There is a strong feeling that the district needs a policy statement that covers the standards, in a way that says, "students shall read at...level, across disaggregated data groups." Staff members from one middle school were concerned that Filipino students, who performed well at their level, did not continue to do so at the high school level. A review of the assessment scores indicated that there are performance gaps, with African American, Hispanic and Low SES populations being at the lowest levels. There were a number of comments about teacher/student interactions and unconscious professional interactions such as asking one person what he or she thought an entire group might think or say about something.

A rather extensive interview with a Latina American elementary teacher provided a lot of insight. She has a Masters in reading, is certified as a Reading Specialist and is a member of CABE. She formerly worked in the (a big) City Schools. She stated that she wasn't happy with the leadership in her former district and that they didn't "value the teacher's professional judgment." She was very happy in her current position and said that there is support for the programs and classes and the needed resources are available. She did say that they could use help with the translation load, but that it's getting better. For example, she said, "People don't know about this community. There is an 'image' problem. Many perceive it to be all white and rich." The message is that it's really hard for others to "get into this district" and that it's "hard to get tenured." This teacher had been interviewed at the site level, not at the Personnel Commission first. She suggested bringing in more student teachers and letting them "find out what the district is really like."

Having noticed similar visual displays and topics at some of the different elementary and middle schools, I asked the teachers where they got most of their ideas. Reportedly, about ten percent come from grade level teams and ninety percent come from the teachers, aided by their participation in professional development activities, such as "Writing Workshop" and "Reader's Workshop." An enthusiastic female elementary teacher from European American background said, "We're autonomous. They want us to meet district and state standards, but how we get there is up to us. It's a great district!"

General Commendations
District Level
Commend:

- District Board, Administration and members of HRDAC for requesting and implementing a district wide Human Relations and Cultural Diversity Audit of the Curriculum, programs, practices and activities.
- District Contact and Learning Support Service Staff for facilitating site visitations and compiling material for review.
- Board and District Personnel for providing policies and procedures in compliance with state and federal laws related to Human Relations and Civil Rights for employees and students.
- All District Personnel involved in providing leadership in Curriculum Development and Textbook Adoption that reflects a commitment to Cultural Competency and Human Relations.
- All District Personnel responsible for disaggregating and reporting data which can be used to monitor the success for all students.

Site Level
Commend:

- All Site Administrators, Staff, Students and Community Members for their hospitality, cooperation and responses to the interviews and observations.
- All Staff members who have participated and continue to participate in conferences and workshops in order to further their own cultural competence and human relations expertise.
- All Staff members who promote positive learning environments by incorporating cultural diversity into their bulletin boards, book displays and classroom organization on a daily basis.
- All Staff members who collaborate with district and site personnel to infuse cultural diversity and human relations into the curriculum content and daily interactions with students, parents and colleagues.
- All Staff members who serve as culturally diverse role models for the students and community.
- All Site Administrators, who demonstrated through their comments, printed materials and other communications with students, staff and parents, the importance of complying with the district, state and federal equity-related mandates.

- All Site Administrators and Staff members who have established consistent instructional and behavioral expectations and guidelines to ensure fairness when dealing with students and parents.
- All Staff members from culturally diverse backgrounds who were willing to share their experiences and perspectives during the Human Relations audit.

Summary of Strengths

- Most staff members have a basic awareness of Human Relations and the need to be culturally competent. Most are aware of the importance of creating a positive and supportive learning environment. Most are aware of the importance of reinforcing the content and student identity with multiple displays, visuals and learning stations.

General Recommendations
District Level
Recommend:

- Board and District personnel continue to update, revise and provide policies, as needed, in compliance with state and federal mandates related to Human Relations and Civil Rights and responsibilities for employees and students.
- District personnel continue to provide pamphlets on policies and procedures for parents and students on the topic of harassment and encourage sites to disseminate the information to the members of their learning community.
- District personnel encourage sites to publish the name and number of the district Title IX Coordinator and other Complaint procedures, as required by federal and state antidiscrimination mandates.
- District personnel and District Diversity Employment Task Force reassess the recruitment and hiring practices and explore ways in which the district can be advertised and promoted to a more diverse pool of teaching candidates.
- District personnel consider ways in which the positive experiences of diverse staff members might be publicized throughout the district and state.
- District Learning Support Service (LSS) Staff develop a policy statement that incorporates human relations concerns into the standards and requiring success to be measured at specific levels across disaggregated data groups.
- Board adopts a policy statement requiring standards for success to be measured across disaggregated data groups.
- District provides professional development opportunities for LSS staff personnel to monitor and increase cultural competence and human relation skills of instructional staff related to classroom interaction patterns and curriculum.

Site Level
Recommend:

- Site administrators make all staff, students and community members aware of the policies and procedures related to Human Relations and Cultural Diversity and publish the district compliance officer ('s) name and number(s).
- Site administrators provide opportunities for staff members to participate in professional development activities and conferences designed to elevate their level of cultural competency and expand their knowledge of culturally responsive interactions and curriculum content.
- District and site personnel encourage staff members to build friendships and professional alliances with other staff members from diverse ethnic backgrounds.
- District and site personnel obtain resources and materials from professional sources specializing in increasing and expanding curriculum content to be more representative of a diverse society.

- District and site administrators encourage instructional staff to include a measurable performance goal related to increasing their cultural competence and Human Relations skills.
- District and site media and instructional personnel review and revise the print and visual inventory and displays to be more representative of cultural diversity and avoid portraying groups of people in stereotypical activities.
- District and site personnel participate in professional development to increase the capacity for on going self-monitoring and self-assessment in all areas related to Human Relations and Cultural Competency and/or responsiveness.

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Appendix

Appendix A

Evaluative Comments from the Gender Equity Specialists Training Sessions

(1= Not true – 5 = Very true)

	Teachers & Staff November, 2001 N = 31	District Preschool Teachers January, 2002 N = 14
1. I learned a new concept from the session.	3.35	4.29
2. This information will help me in my classroom.	4.06	4.36
3. I already knew this information.	3.32	3.36
4. The session reinforced my understanding.	4.03	4.79
5. This session was very helpful.	4.00	4.50

Appendix B

Comparative chart of teacher evaluative results for the entire project

Staff Survey

(1-strongly disagree – 5 –strongly agree)

	1999-01	2001-02	% Diff
1. This project has been a great experience for (school) students.	3.90	4.09	5%+
2. Students' math and/or science skills seemed to improve as a result of the project.	2.90	3.30	14%+
3. The project has provided students with information and ideas about career options.	4.43	4.48	1%+
4. The project has helped students improve or maintain good grades at (the school).	2.68	3.64	36%+
5. The project has helped improve or maintain math and science grades at (the school).	2.76	3.39	23%+
6. The mentoring, fieldtrips, and other activities were beneficial for the students.	3.73	4.34	16%+
7. Because of the gender-equity training held on campus, I understand more about supporting students	3.48	3.74	7%+
8. I noticed that students seemed more motivated to do well in school because of the project.	3.00	3.48	16%+
9. The project is helpful to me as a teacher.	2.95	3.42	16%+
10. I would recommend the project to other girls.	4.05	4.48	11%+

Outcome 1: Teacher Knowledge

Year 1

Activity:

- Two half-day Professional Development Workshops in Gender Equity for 71 middle school teachers.

Results:

- 92% of teachers attended workshop 1.
- 83% of teachers attended workshop 2.
- Average pre-test score of content-based assessment was 68%.
- Average post-test score was 95%, indicating an average increase in teacher knowledge of 27%.

Year 2

Activity:

- Presentation to all feeder elementary school principals and equity materials packets created for all 6th grade school teachers and principals.

Results:

- Two principals requested and received equity sessions for all 6th grade students and teachers.
- Packets delivered to teachers and principals at all feeder schools.

Year 3

Activity:

- Two teacher retreats provided.

Results:

- 9 teachers and 2 administrators participated in first retreat.
- 10 teachers and 1 administrator attended the second retreat.

Year 4

Activity:

- Continued Team Planning Meetings

Result:

- 45 teachers and 1 administrator participated.

- Gender Equity Teachers Training.

- 31 Teachers attended and rated the session an average score of 3.87 on a 5 pt. scale with 4 items indicating usefulness and new knowledge. (Appendix A)

- Gender Equity Inservice for Preschool Teachers

- 14 preschool teachers attended and rated the session an average score of 4.49 on a 5 pt. scale with 4 items indicating usefulness and new knowledge (Appendix A)

- Project Evaluation from teacher participants.

- Results from a staff survey administered at the end of the first year and again at the conclusion of the project indicated that teachers perceived the project to have had a very positive impact on students and the school. Items related to improvement of grades overall and math and science specifically indicated a major shift in teachers' perceptions of the project. There was strong agreement that the mentoring, field trips and other activities were very beneficial for the students. (Appendix B)

Outcome 2: Leadership

Year 1 & 2

Activity:	**Results:**
➢ Due to a 33% budgetary cut, objective 2 was not addressed during the first two years of the grant. ($50,000 annual reduction)	➢ NA

Year 3 &4

Activities:	**Results:**
➢ Two teacher Gender Equity Specialists (GES) were hired from within the existing school staff.	➢ Maintained written reflection logs.
➢ Training was provided to the GES through participation at a national gender equity conference, workshops and a college course.	➢ Maintained written reflection logs.
➢ Two GES met with the district Director of Human Resources to share options for staff development.	➢ Notice sent to all district managers about gender equity/sexual harassment resources.
➢ Two GES serve as district resources	➢ On-going requests for services.

Outcome 3 – Student Knowledge

Year 1

Exposure to Math and Science experiences through mentoring and a variety of activities

A total 427 students participated in 7 activities

Activities:	**Results:**
➢ Mentoring	➢ 31 Participants. Increase in science GPA by 9% and in math GPA by 2.4% for subset of fifteen 7th grade girls. No increase for 8th grade girls. Variable: 7th grade girls told they had to maintain a "B average" or better in order to qualify for the project.
➢ AZ Explorathon	➢ 72 participants
➢ Career and H.S. Exploration	➢ 129 participants. Mentees were asked 2 questions to measure knowledge related to engineering degree. 91% answered each question correctly.
➢ Engineering Exploration	➢ 64 participants. Mentees answered 100% of 5 questions related to engineering and exhibits at the science center correctly.
➢ Expanding Your Horizons	➢ 19 participants. Pre/post event evaluation indicated student's ability to identify 6 additional math/science career fields and 12 additional uses for math.
➢ Roving Mars (field trip)	➢ 29 participants on a scale of 1-10, with 10 highest, 76% of the students rated the event as an 8 or above for increasing their knowledge
➢ EAGLES Club (Career Counseling Math Science Activities)	➢ 83 participants/30% were mentees. Pre/post test on knowledge of engineering degrees indicated a 20% average increase (from 60% to 80%) for the participants.

Outcome #3 Total Student Participation

	Totals 1314	Yr. 1 427	Yr. 2 432	Yr. 3 270	Yr. 4 185
Mentoring	191	31	79/44 (27% ethnic minority)	51/32 (34% ethnic minority)	30/20 (40 % ethnic minority)
Explorathon, AZ	177	72	26	29	50
Career and High School Exploration	243	129	75	39	–
Engineering Exploration	197	64	52	51	30
EAGLES Math & Science Activities	506	131	200 (400 6th grade Intro to EAGLES)	100	75

Outcome 4: Minority Female Role Models

Mentoring Program –
Recruitment/Selection of Mentors (Included training, background checks and drug testing)

Year 1: 32 Total/14 EM (43% Ethnic Minority)
Year 2: 44 Total/12 EM (27% Ethnic Minority)
Year 3: 32 Total/11 EM (34% Ethnic Minority)
Year 4: 20 Total /8 EM (40% Ethnic Minority)

Year 1: Group Meetings & Individual Interviews:
Anecdotal data identified patterns of concern: isolation, cultural identification, math anxiety, fear of failure, lack of parental support.

Year 2: Anecdotal data revealed high levels of confidence for mentees. Concerns included isolation, majority/minority conflicts, fear of failure or success, lack of funding and lack of parental support.

Year 3: Responses from "Ethnic Minority Mentor Interviews".

Year 4: Checked grades and engagement variables for comparative analysis. (Are any findings from the paper by White & L. Roberson referred to in the annual report available?)

Outcome 5: Parents/ Knowledge

Parent University	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
• Career & HS Exploration	Participated with students-all evaluations rated good or excellent.	Same	Same	NA
• Engineering Exploration	Participated with students-all evaluations rated good or excellent	Same	NA	NA
• Expanding Your Horizons	14 parents participated. Pre/Post event evaluations indicated that parents were able to identify 9 additional ways to include daughters and 12 additional math/sci career fields.	NA	NA	NA
• Project Orientation & Project Year-End Banquet	NA	Over 75 parent participants	Over 50 parent participants	Over 30 parent participants
• Parents as Partners Workshop	NA	20 parent participants (with students). Parents learned about opportunities in Math/Sci & Tech.	Parent participants learned about opportunities.	

Outcome 6: District Policy

Department Inservices	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
• General Wkshp for Adm. and teachers.	120 participants	50	100	Meeting of GES w/ District Human Resources Mgr.
• Sexual Harassment for principals/dept. heads	35 participants	50	Ongoing	
• Seminar on sexual misconduct and child abuse reporting.	_____	150	_____	Ongoing
•Served as On-site resource for admin. on sexual harassment policies.	_____	✓	_____	_____
• Written policies, dissemination of information mailer.	_____	✓	Ongoing	GES involved in revision of district's teacher evaluation instrument.

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